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Metropolitan Area Planning Council



MAPC GIS LAB

The MAPC Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Lab offers a range of services to in-house staff, municipalities, and other external clients. The lab works with MAPC staff members on projects such as MetroPlan 2000, buildout analyses, and water resource studies. Some recent projects have included a zoning and transportation study for the TRIC subregion, regional buildout studies for four towns on the South Shore and six communities along Route 495, a downtown revitalization plan for the Town of Canton, and data development for a Welfare-to-Work project.

The GIS lab is involved in a variety of municipal assistance initiatives such as providing workshops on parcel data automation, municipal GIS implementation, and conducting needs assessments. The lab also acts as an information resource for municipalities to start or expand their GIS programs. It provides custom map making services, geo-coding services, small-scale data development, conducts pilot studies, and offers computer programming skills on a fee-for-service basis. The lab has assisted communities apply for grant money to help develop their GIS programs as well.

MAPC also does fee-for-service GIS work for other external clients such as non-profits, planning consultants, and commercial organizations that are often looking for custom map making or computer programming assistance. The lab has done mapping for the Middlesex Canal Commission and has developed a variety of service area maps for state legislators, private companies, and planning and transportation consultants.

MAPC has two full-time staff members and utilizes intern help throughout the year. The lab is equipped with Arc/Info, ArcView, TransCAD, and MapInfo GIS software running on Windows NT with a digitizer, a CD writer, a scanner, and a HP 750c/Plus plotter.



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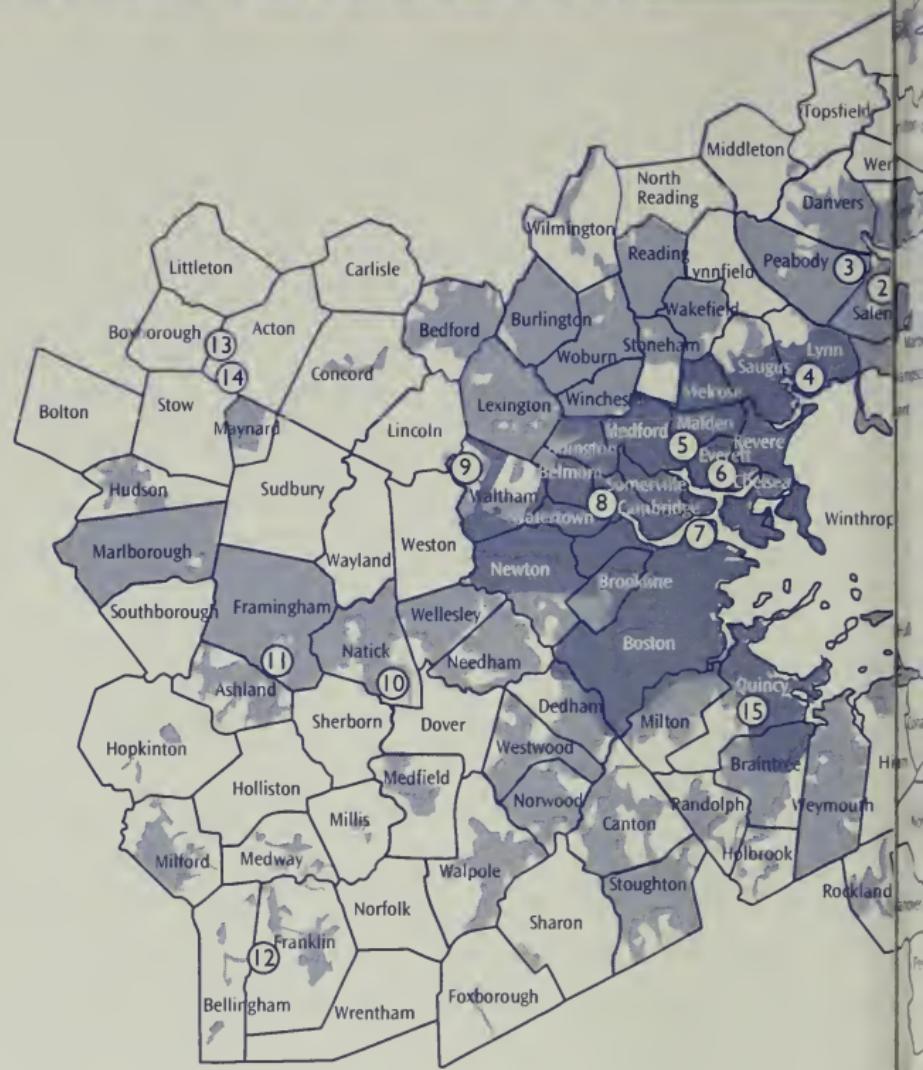
As the regional planning agency for metropolitan Boston, the Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) advocates a comprehensive approach to growth and development that addresses the complex economic and environmental issues we face as a regional community. Massachusetts, like other industrial states, is responding to a changing and increasingly competitive global economy. Simultaneously, there is growing awareness on the part of leadership that economic growth and development must be enhanced by preservation of our natural environment.

MetroPlan, the regional development plan for the Boston metropolitan area, is an outgrowth of MAPC's commitment to promote efficient and environmentally sound development. Adopted in 1990, the plan's framework promotes a sustainable development pattern, focusing on existing infrastructure, to strengthen the region's economy and safeguard air, water, and land resources. *MetroPlan* is an advisory process involving MAPC, its member communities, and key state agencies.

MetroPlan encourages efficient development by promoting compact development patterns and discouraging sprawl. Compact development patterns include a mix of uses, including residential, commercial, and retail. Jobs are located in closer proximity to homes and near public transportation facilities. This reduces traffic by promoting alternatives to the automobile such as transit, vanpools, bicycling, and walking. Reduced auto trips decrease air pollution and help the region meet Clean Air Act requirements. By limiting sprawl, *MetroPlan* also encourages the protection of open space and sensitive natural resources such as wetlands, watersheds, and aquifers.

To achieve these goals, *MetroPlan* recommends a three-tiered regional development plan that prioritizes areas for new development according to existing infrastructure. The three policy areas include the **Urban Area**, which has densities high enough to support public transportation services; the **Multi-**

METROPLAN POLICY AREAS

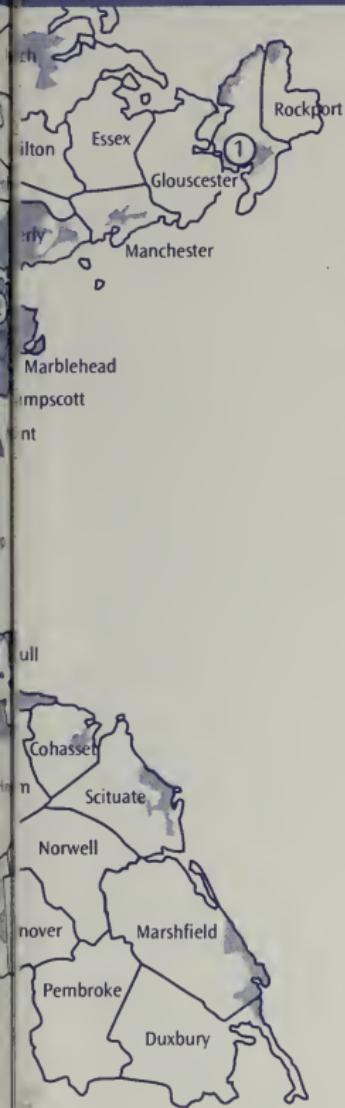


Service Area, which has existing sewer services, and the Sub-urban/Rural Area, which does not have sewer services. The plan recommends appropriate development densities in each of the three policy areas.

MetroPlan also provides for the designation of special development areas within municipalities, called Concentrated Development Centers (CDCs). These are areas that support compact, mixed use development with a balance of housing and jobs and are transit-accessible and pedestrian-friendly. To date, thirteen CDCs have been designated by MAPC, and 52 more have been nominated by local governments throughout the region.

MAPC is implementing *MetroPlan* by promoting it in numerous public forums:

Environmental Reviews - MAPC reviews projects under the state's environmental review process, the federal review process, and the intergovernmental review process. In conduct-



MetroPlan 2000 Policy Areas

- Urban Area
- Multi-Service
- Suburban/Rural
- Concentrated Development Center (CDC)

Designated CDCs

1. Gloucester
2. Salem
3. Peabody
4. Lynn
5. Malden
6. Chelsea
7. Urban Economic Core
8. Alewife
9. Waltham
10. Natick
11. Framingham
12. Franklin
13. West Acton

ing these reviews, MAPC comments on the consistency of the proposed project with the goals and criteria of *MetroPlan*.

Capital Investment Program - *MetroPlan* includes a process for reviewing proposed public infrastructure projects. The Capital Investment Program screens these projects for consistency with *MetroPlan* and recommends a higher priority for those projects that support the regional development plan. The CIP lists transportation and sewer projects.

Transportation Improvement Program - MAPC works with its member cities and towns and state transportation agencies to prioritize transportation projects for public funding. MAPC reviews TIP projects and gives priority to supporting projects that are consistent with *MetroPlan*.

Regional Transportation Plan - As a member of the Metropolitan Planning Organization, MAPC participates in the formation of a Regional Transportation Plan. MAPC works to encourage policies and recommendations in the Regional

Transportation Plan that are consistent with *MetroPlan*.

Local Plan Consistency - MAPC reviews local master plans and open space plans and advises communities on their consistency with *MetroPlan*.

Overall Economic Development Program - MAPC works with member communities and community development corporations to set priorities for federal grants from the Economic Development Administration (EDA). MAPC screens projects against *MetroPlan* criteria.

REGIONAL ISSUES AFFECTING THE MAPC REGION

MetroPlan is designed to address these issues:

ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT: Since 1980, the region has lost one-third of its manufacturing jobs.

LAND USE: Since 1950, the region has lost 261,089 acres of open space (forest, agricultural land, and wetlands), representing 36% of total land area in just 40 years.

TRANSPORTATION: Traffic is growing at more than 2½% per year, and 80% of the region's expressways are congested during rush hours.

AIR QUALITY: The region is currently in violation of the Clean Air Act, and expects increases in auto travel.

WATER QUALITY: Over two-thirds of the rivers fail the water quality standards; over twenty towns have lost public water supplies to groundwater contamination.

HOUSING: The region's ratio of housing cost to income is among the highest in the nation. Only 4 of MAPC's 101 communities meet the state goal of 10% affordable housing.



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ABOUT MAPC

Regional cooperation and metropolitan community are more important today than ever before. Cities and towns across the Commonwealth are facing serious strategic issues in the areas of economic development, infrastructure, environmental protection, and social equity. Simultaneously, there is growing recognition of the need for municipal cooperation and regional governance in achieving workable solutions to these complex challenges.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is a regional planning agency representing 101 cities and towns in the metropolitan Boston area. Created by an act of the Legislature in 1963, it serves as a forum for state and local officials to address issues of regional importance. As one of 14 members of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), MAPC has oversight responsibility for the region's federally funded transportation program.

Council membership consists of community representatives, gubernatorial appointees and city and state agencies who collaborate in the development of comprehensive plans and recommendations in areas of population and employment, transportation, economic development, regional growth and the environment. The Council also provides technical assistance and advocacy to its member communities.

MAPC works with its 101 cities and towns through eight sub-regional organizations. Each subregion has members appointed by chief elected officials and planning boards. The Council supports the subregions by providing planning information, organizational experience and technical expertise to foster project development. The subregions develop an annual work plan with the assistance of an MAPC staff person who serves as subregional coordinator.

Funding for Council activities comes from federal and state grants, contracts with public and private agents, and a per capita assessment on member communities approved annually by municipal representatives.

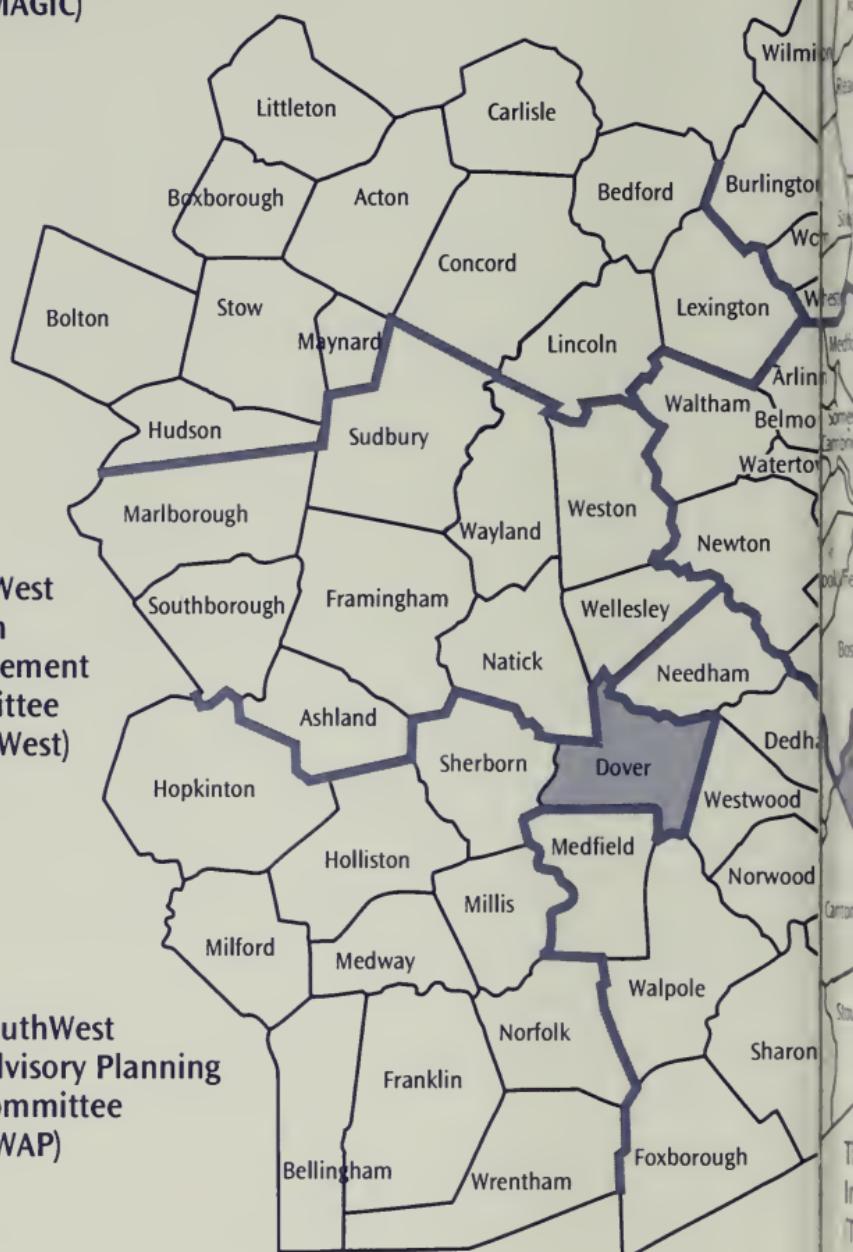
THE MAPC REGION AND SUBREGIONS

Minuteman Advisory Group
on Interlocal Coordination
(MAGIC)

North Suburb
Planning Coun
(NSPC)

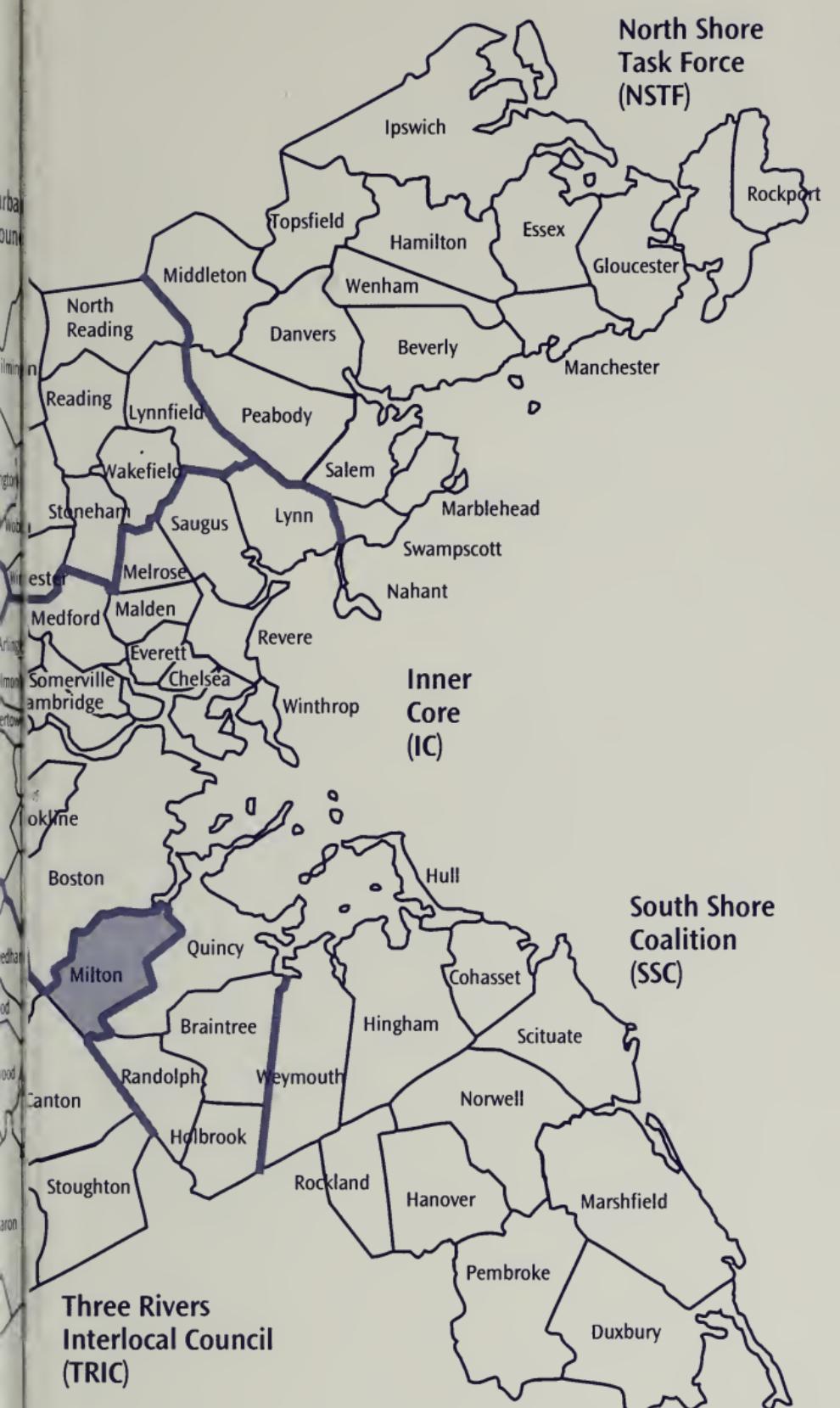
MetroWest
Growth
Management
Committee
(MetroWest)

SouthWest
Advisory Planning
Committee
(SWAP)



Shaded areas indicate communities in more than one region.

The MAPC region consists of 21 cities and 80 towns in the state (based on the 1990 census). The total land area of the region is most of the towns inside the I-495 boundary. The MAPC divides the communities, older industrial centers, rural towns, and modern



The greater Boston area. The population of the region is 2,922,934 and is 1,422 square miles stretching west from Boston to include 100 cities. The region is divided into eight subregions and encompasses coastal



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LEGISLATIVE SERVICES

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) actively promotes a legislative agenda to safeguard the region's quality of life and economic well-being. The Council works with elected officials on local, state, and federal levels to inform them about regional needs and to encourage co-operative solutions to transportation, environmental, and economic concerns. As a result, MAPC has developed a strong and effective legislative program for the 101 cities and towns within its jurisdiction.

MAPC's legislative agenda is based on the goals and objectives of metropolitan Boston's regional growth and development strategy, *MetroPlan*. The plan's framework promotes a sustainable development pattern that makes efficient use of public infrastructure and allows for growth while improving the quality of the region's air, water and land resources.

MAPC's Legislative Committee meets monthly to advise the Council on state and federal legislative initiatives required to implement regional planning objectives. The Committee develops and oversees MAPC's legislative agenda and guides interaction with federal and state legislators. Priority legislation typically represents issues relative to transportation, open space protection, economic development, and affordable housing.

On the state level, MAPC actively works for the passage of key regional legislation by maintaining close contact with legislators, attending committee hearings, building constituent coalitions, and establishing a regional presence on issues of importance to the Council. MAPC's efforts have solidified support for a number of recent legislative initiatives including the Metropolitan Highway System Bill, the Open Space Bond Bill, and the Transportation Bond Bill.

On the federal level, MAPC maintains a strong working relationship with the state's Congressional delegation through regular briefings and updates. MAPC is also a member of the National Association of Regional Councils (NARC), which allows it the opportunity to interact with regional councils across the nation and closely examine federal policy issues affecting all regional councils. MAPC's federal legislative priorities include: the implementation of TEA 21, the Clean Water Act, the Reauthorization of the Community Development Block Grant and HOME programs, Smart Growth and Superfund Reauthorization, among others. MAPC is similarly involved with the activities of the New England Association of Regional Councils (NEARC) which encourages collaboration between delegation members from all the New England states.

MAPC is a credible and reliable information source for its member communities, as well as for members of the Massachusetts House and Senate. The Council subscribes to a legislative on-line service, "InstaTrac" which provides instant access to all legislation and related activities occurring in the General Court. Municipalities and legislators often seek information on potential legislative initiatives from MAPC's professional staff who are in touch with current issue areas.



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METROPOLITAN DATA SERVICES

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) offers a broad range of up-to-date demographic and economic information on 101 cities and towns in eastern Massachusetts. Well known in the region as an important research and forecasting resource, MAPC publishes community profiles, forecasts population and employment trends.

Data services range from the distribution of federal census and economic statistics to analyses of population change, housing, land use, and employment.

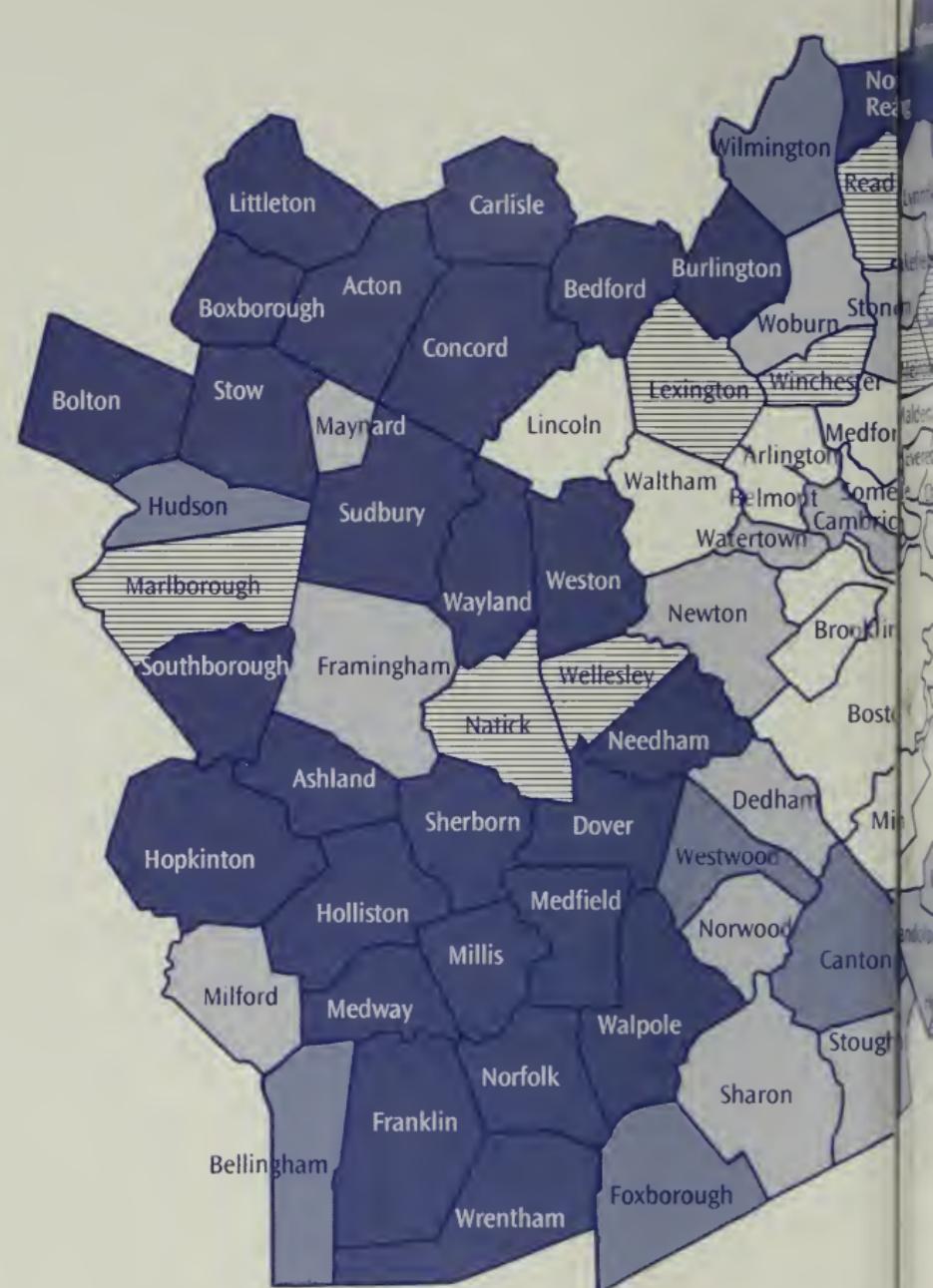
The Massachusetts Electronic Atlas is a collaborative project between MAPC's Data staff, Harvard University and the University of Massachusetts Boston. The Atlas provides access, via the Internet, to data on the Commonwealth, its thirteen regional planning agency districts and 351 cities and towns. This service improves the economic development resources available for public sector decision-making and provides information access for business decisions that create new jobs and income growth.

Atlas users can download data files, create maps with Geographic Information System software, retrieve map compositions, and display information as charts or graphs. These capabilities take the Massachusetts Atlas beyond similar Internet sites that only offer simple Graphic Image Files.

Data staff have also developed computer interfaces for queries and provided specialized applications to track municipal data such as tracking leasing activity.

Forecasts of community population, households and employment are regularly updated to reflect recent trends. The forecasts improve decision-making in the planning and design of major infrastructure projects such as highways, commuter rail, transit, sewer systems, and municipal service delivery. They are also used in private sector planning and marketing initiatives. MAPC also provides demographic expertise to municipalities and school boards in forecasting school enrollment and classroom needs. These independent

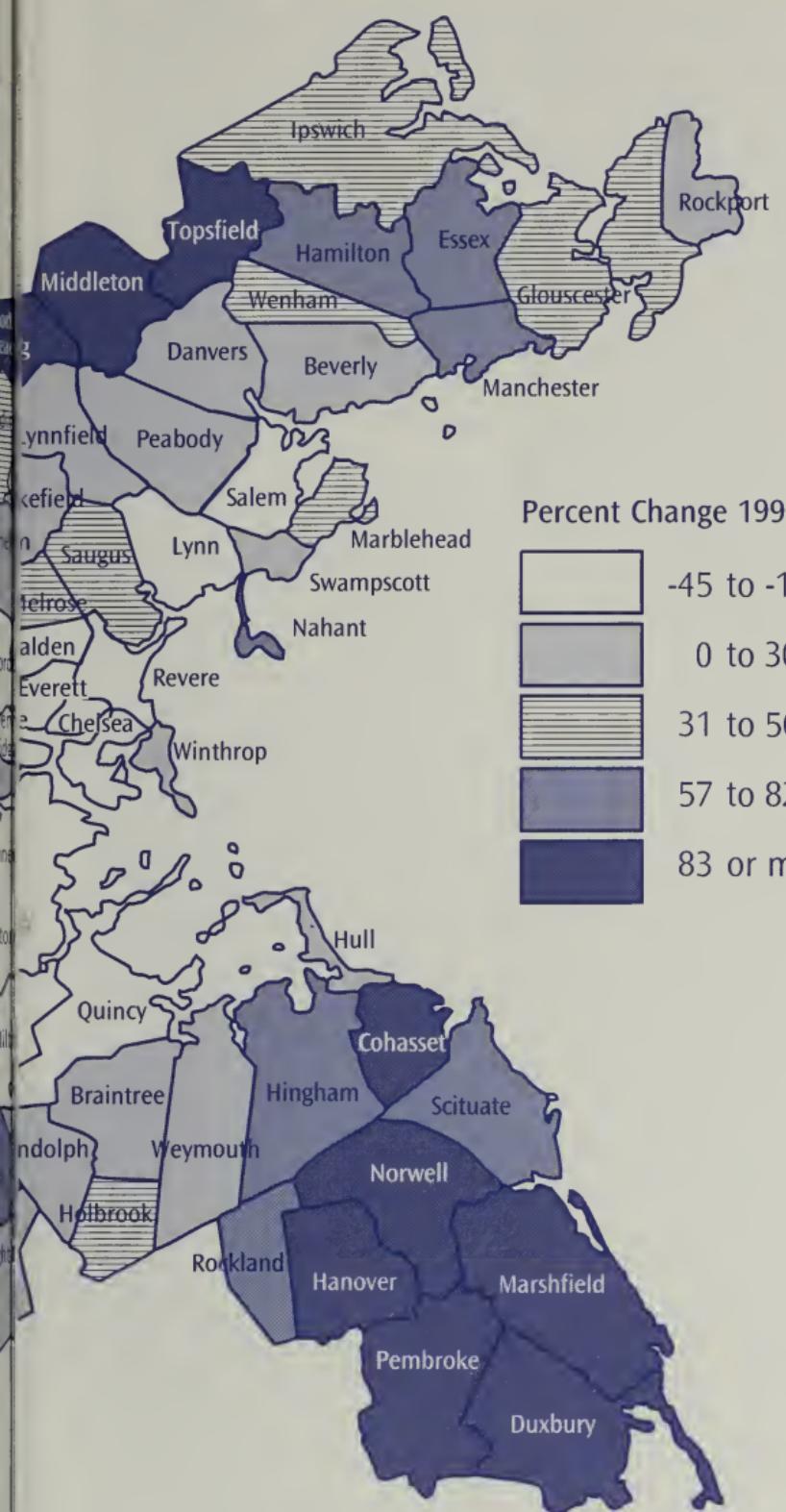
PERCENT CHANGE IN POPULATION 65+ 1990-2000



studies can save communities from overbuilding or validate the need for new construction. Data Forecasts are also used in private sector planning and marketing initiatives.

MAPC generates *Community Profiles* which incorporate a broad range of statistics and graphs to track post-1990 demographic changes in population, race, jobs, income school enrollment,

1990–2020



births and housing. Data Services also offers community profiles which summarize information from the 1990 decennial census. Both types of profiles are being incorporated into a larger relational database, easily manipulated for analysis, mapping and reports on any subject or community.



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TRANSPORTATION SERVICES

The economic vitality of Massachusetts is dependent upon a strong transportation infrastructure. From commuting to commerce, the means by which we move people and goods impacts our ability to attract new growth, support existing industry, and position ourselves prominently in the global marketplace. Continued and careful investment in the region's roads, bridges and public transportation system is critical to the long term success of the metropolitan Boston area.

The Metropolitan Area Planning Council (MAPC) is one of fourteen members of the Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO), charged with oversight of the federally funded transportation program for the Boston region. As a voting member of the MPO, the Council represents 101 cities and towns in the transportation decision-making process. The MPO is responsible for the development, review and approval of three key documents: the Regional Transportation Plan, the Transportation Improvement Program and the Unified Planning Work Program.

The Regional Transportation Plan is the overall guiding document for transportation programs and projects in the Boston region. It provides a framework for future transportation investments. As such, the development of the Regional Transportation Plan is critical to MAPC's member communities and their involvement is strongly encouraged through the Council's subregions and committees, as well as through the public review procedures adopted by the Boston MPO. The Regional Transportation Plan influences both the Transportation Improvement Program and the Unified Planning Work Program by identifying transportation system improvements.

Projects from the Regional Transportation Plan are programmed for implementation in the Transportation Improvement Program. Through the development of the Transportation Improvement Program (TIP), MAPC works to ensure that those transportation projects in our member communities receive full consideration in the Commonwealth's transportation funding process. MAPC has a full-time coordinator to assist cities and towns in TIP development. The Council also maintains a project status da-

tabase to provide communities with up-to-date information on local projects from concept to construction. The TIP document is updated throughout the year and endorsed each August.

Transportation issues worthy of further study are scheduled in the Unified Planning Work Program (UPWP). This document is reviewed and updated annually and helps to identify future TIP projects and MPO policy issues. Many MAPC projects are found in the UPWP.

MAPC also coordinates the review of transportation enhancement projects for the Boston region. The purpose of the Transportation Enhancement Program is to improve the quality of life for transportation users by implementing projects that add community, environmental, scenic, or historic value. The program is funded through the federal Transportation Equity Act of 1998 (TEA-21).

Since the implementation of ISTEA in 1991, MAPC has worked to ensure that federal Congestion Mitigation/Air Quality (CMAQ) funds are set aside for the region's Transportation Demand Management (TDM) programs. These projects employ strategies or techniques that manage transportation demand through, improved mobility, reduced congestion, and lowered fuel use and pollution. TDM strategies encourage people to adopt transportation alternatives such as walking, cycling, ridesharing, and public transit.

MAPC has also been instrumental in ensuring that a portion of the CMAQ funds are set aside for use by Transportation Management Associations (TMA). These are independent, non-profit organizations comprised of business leaders, developers, local government representatives, and civic groups which work to address transportation issues within a specific area. The TMA Assistance Program is designed to encourage the formation of new TMAs and to support those already in existence by helping them develop and test new or expanded transportation demand services and programs.



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GOVERNMENT DOCUMENTS
COLLECTION

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